**The beginning of Suffrage in Illinois**

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In 1912, every local mayor and city council member, every Illinois state legislator and statewide official and every member of Congress was male. In fact, every voter in the presidential election in Illinois that year was a man.

That was the end of that. By the 1916 election, women in Illinois had limited suffrage; they couldn't vote for any office established by the Illinois Constitution, such as governor or state senator or representative. But they could vote for electors of the president and vice president, for University of Illinois trustees, for county surveyors and on local referendum issues. Illinois was a leader in giving women, limited as it was, voting rights. When the Illinois House voted 83-58 to give women some suffrage on June 12, 1913, and Gov. Edward Dunne signed the bill into law 15 days later, Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi to, as newspapers put it, "give considerable voting power to women." Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington and California already had given women full voting rights. The women's suffrage movement had existed in Illinois for decades but gained real momentum in the early 1900s, and by 1912 there was considerable support for it in Champaign County. Part of the reason was that prohibitionists, who were the majority locally, believed that women would vote "dry" and would further their cause. In fact, Urbana Mayor F.H. Boggs declared that women voters "would better enforce laws than men mayors (apparently including himself) and argued that in city affairs women voters would 'keep her dry.'" "If for instance, Urbana had a woman for mayor," the Champaign Daily News paraphrased Boggs, "the mayor of Urbana argued that the bootlegging joints in the county seat would be closed and that all laws would be enforced to the letter. "Boggs made his comments at a town meeting on women's suffrage at the University YMCA 100 years ago this month. Maurice Wormser, an assistant professor of law at the University of Illinois, argued that "our government is not by the people when we exclude women." "Men may be more intelligent in casting their ballot but women are certainly more pure and their influence would greatly enhance the purity of the land," he said, according to the News. Mrs. Albert Stern predicted that giving women the right to vote would have far-reaching social consequences. "Women are entered into educational, economic and political fields," the News reported her saying, "and if they had the ballot, more would go into these fields of uplift. The ballot, she thought, would bring broader womanhood and greater motherhood." O.B. Dobbins, who later became mayor of Champaign, "argued against the theory that real women do not want to vote, and that it is only mannish women that do so," reported the News. The Daily Gazette reported that Dobbins said that "a boy as long as he was under the influence of his mother would vote right, but let him wander away into the unclean element and he would go astray. "Not everyone it seems was an enthusiastic supporter of women's suffrage. Charles Kiler, a Champaign businessman, argued that if women were really interested in voting "this room would be filled and the next meeting would have to be held in West Side Park. There are many women who do not want suffrage, just as many men do not want clean streets and good country roads. The big stick here will not work. You cannot jam suffrage down the throats of women, and you will have to educate the women ... before you can give it to them. "Universal suffrage among men is a detriment and among women it would be worse," Kiler concluded. The 1916 presidential election was a record-setter in Illinois with nearly 2.2 million people casting ballots, an increase of more than a million over the 1912 turnout. And because women used different ballots than men — they could not vote for statewide officials or state legislators or most county offices — their presidential votes were tallied separately in most counties. The Urbana Daily Courier had expressed misgivings about giving women voting rights, fearing they would be "too easily swayed by an appeal to the emotions" and would support President Wilson because he had kept the United States out of the brewing world war. "The vote of the women of Illinois tomorrow is being watched closely by the nation, and it is no secret that the apparent failure to measure up to high standards of citizenship and patriotism will prove a heavy blow to the suffrage movement. "But both statewide and in Champaign County, there was little difference in the presidential vote by gender. In Champaign County, Wilson got 38.6 percent of the male vote and 39.3 percent of the female vote. Statewide, Republican Charles Evans Hughes got 52.7 percent of the male vote and 52.4 percent of the female vote; Wilson received 43 percent of the male vote, 43.7 percent of the women. The most interesting result — one that had no bearing on the election but confirmed to a small degree earlier predictions — was that women voted in much greater numbers for the Prohibition ticket. But although it got almost twice as many votes from women as men, the Prohibition ticket got barely 26,000 of the 2.2 million votes cast in Illinois. Women already had proven they would not be single-issue voters.

After reading the article answer the following questions on the back of your guided notes:

1) By the 1916 election, women in Illinois had limited suffrage. What could they vote for? What could they not vote for? (2 pts)

2) What were two objections and fears of extending suffrage to women? (2 pts)

3) Read Charles Kiler’s argument against women’s suffrage beginning with,” this room would be filled…” Consider his objections, in your opinion is there any validity? How would universal suffrage among men a detriment? (2 pts)

4) What is meant by, “ women would vote ‘dry’”? (1 pt)

5) What did the voting statistics of 1916 reveal about the difference in presidential vote by gender? (2pts)

6) How did the election of 1916 prove that women would not be single-issue voters? (2 pts)

7) Summarize this article by choosing one method: write 6-7 sentences, make a drawing, or summarize orally with Mr Thompson.